

Sound Waves

Magaz

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**Volume 32
Issue 6
June 2022**

**An
Interview
with**

**ERIC
KRASNO**

Plus

- Lush Honey
- Merle Jagger
- Levee Town
- Anna May
- Stephen Clair
- Andrew Leahey
& the Homestead
- Markey Blue
- Ric Latina Project
- Casey Moran

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8 Davey Blues	9 Jaci & Nate ACOUSTIC	10 Bloomer	11 American Honey <i>Boots & Bling Party</i>	12 Don't Tell Lisa
15 Chris Hoochin	16 John Fazio	17 Sound Waves	18 Wild Nights	19 Jaime's Junk Show
22 Chris Hoochin	23 Sister Funk <i>Pride Night</i>	24 Family BIZness	25 Pop Rocks <i>Rock The Dock 80's Party</i>	26 21st Century Kids
29 Chris Hoochin	30 Casey Flax			

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7 TBA 2pm	8 DJ DONNY D 1pm	9 TBA 2pm	10 KEVIN & LIL CHRIS 2pm	11 FUSION 2pm	12 POP ROCKS 2pm
14 TBA 2pm	15 DJ DONNY D 1pm	16 GREG MATTSON 2pm	17 DB KINNEY DUO 2pm	18 DON'T TELL LISA 2pm	19 PULSE 2pm
21 JAIME 2pm	22 TBA 2pm	23 MARTY Q DUO 2pm	24 CRASH 21 2pm DJ FELIX 8pm	25 WILD NIGHTS 2pm	26 AQUANETT 2pm
28 JAIME 2pm	29 LATE NITE COMPANY 2pm	30 CHRIS HOOCHIN 2pm	1 MARTY Q BAND 2pm	Saturday 18th HAMPTON'S WHITE PARTY 8pm Dj Felix spinning the 90's	

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Sound Waves

June 2022

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"The suspense is first-rate as the plot unfolds to the story's end and will have the readers on the edge of their seats..." Rating: 5.0 stars
 Reviewed by Alice D. for Readers Favorite

"The books, engrossing spy thrillers, masterfully interweave past and present with the story of "Sonny" who idealistically joins up in 1944." - By Stacy Trevenon; Half Moon Bay Review.

Ken is the award winning author of The Code Name Series of books. The series is based on his father's experiences behind enemy lines in World War II. He has won awards in the Readers' Favorite contest, The NABE Pinnacle Awards in Military Fiction, and Hollywood, Paris, and New York Book Festivals.

Author Kenneth Pottie

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SOUND WAVES 5

MUSIC NOTES

“Lu’s Lockdown Jukebox”

By Mark T. Gould

It’s just this side of impossible to find any good in this now over two years and counting, Covid-based smorgasbord of illness, isolation and anxiety, but the gifted singer-songwriter Lucinda Williams may have found it.

These two years have been, and to some extent still are, a brutal time to be a working musician.

The outbreak and deathly spread of Covid and its wicked stepchild variants have wreaked havoc on just about everything in its wake.

Life as we knew it came to a standstill. Lockdown.

And, in many ways, we are still trying to crawl out of the abyss.

With all of the craziness, it’s been an incredibly difficult time for everyone trying get work done, and then, trying to have some relaxation and enjoyment in the down time.

That’s where live music, glorious live music was always such an outlet.

As that noted musical philosopher Neil Young once said, “live music are better bumper stickers should be issued.”

But, there was that abyss. Bars closed. Concert halls shuttered. Stadiums eerily empty and quiet.

For musicians, whose livelihood depending on lives shows in the absence of any revenue from our brave new downloading and streaming world, it was, and remains to some extent, a lost time.

But, creativity has a way of making up for some things.

Take, for instance what Lucinda Williams did with her down time.

Williams, whose brilliant recording and concert career stretches back for over four decades, fought through and over her personal Covid doldrums with a brilliant series of six live concerts online, streamed to various clubs and concert halls worldwide. The performances are now available via compact disc and



vinyl at most musical retailers.

She titled it “Lu’s Jukebox,” with each covering a band or genre important to her. Taken separately, or better yet together, they are an absolute tour de force in the hands, and voice, of a musical queen. They are intimate, they are rocking, and they are essential, now more than ever.

“We’ve actually wanted to do a cover series for a long time now, but never had the time with my touring schedule,” Williams told *totalentertainment.com*. “I guess the silver lining in all of this has been to be able to really get inside the songs of some of my favorite artists – see what makes them tick.”

Augmented by her world-weary, intense, and emotionally heart-rendering Americana voice, Williams certainly found out what made them tick.

While the genres stretched all over the musical mosaic, she made each one her uniquely own.

The first was “Runnin’ Down a Dream: A Tribute to Tom Petty.” From the opening lick of “Rebels,” Williams absolutely channels Petty. Just like the other releases, the highlights are too numerous to mention, but, for me, the standout tracks are, in addition to the title song, “Louisiana Rain,” and “You Wreck Me.”

The next one was “Southern Soul: From Memphis to Muscle Shoals and More.” To my ears, this is the highlight

of the project, as Williams brings her emotion and depth to a wide variety of songs, including “Ode to Billy Joe,” “Rainy Night in Georgia,” and “The Games People Play.”

The third rung of the project may have been the most challenging, given both the artist and the material. “Bob’s Back Pages: A Night of Bob Dylan Songs” may now be the gold standard who desires (pun intended) to cover perhaps our finest songwriter, as Williams’s voice fits Dylan’s lyrics like a glove.

Highlights lurk throughout, including “Blind Willie McTell,” “Idiot Wind,” and “Make You Feel My Love.” You gotta think that Dylan, if he heard it, would be very honored by this one.

Volume Four is equal parts astounding and varied. “Funny How Time Slips Away: A Night of 60s Country Classics” is tailor made for Williams’s voice and her band’s presentation. In addition to the title tracks, other standouts include “Apartment #9,” “The End of the World,” and “Together Again.”

The fifth part is a bit of a change of direction, as Williams saluted the holiday season with “Have Yourself A Rockin’ Little Christmas With Lucinda.”

Eschewing the usual diet of “Silent Night” and its all-to-familiar progeny, Williams takes an abrupt turn, and celebrates the yuletide with more out-of-the-way tracks like “Christmas in New Orleans,” “If We Make It Through December,” and “Christmas Tears.”

The final installment is Williams at her best. “You Are Cordially Invited: A Tribute to The Rolling Stones” is Williams rocking out at her finest, covering “Street Fighting Man,” “Salt of the Earth,” “Play With Fire,” and other classics from the Stones’ catalog.

“Lu’s Jukebox” was an innovative project, taken from concept to fruition by an emotionally-invested artist whose taste, talent and diversity shines through. And, as such, she has helped her fans endure the Covid craziness.



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7 Ricky Miller & Ken 5-8pm	10 Dos Amigos 6-9pm	12 Casey Flax 6pm
14 Jeff Lewis 5-8pm	17 TBA Call for info 6-9pm	19 Mike Costa 6pm
21 Kris Ryan 5-8pm	24 Marc Philips 6-9pm	26 Andy Cheney & Friends 6pm
28 Dan Watson 5-8pm	1 Lucas Neil 6-9pm	3 Ben & Rick Duo 6pm

GRAMMA'S ATTIC REVUE

“Casey Moran A Spectacular Maker of Art”

By Gramma

The word that kept coming up in my conversation with this amazing celebrity that resides in New London was Community...Common Unity, and as we talked, I began to see why.

Although Casey was not raised in the city of New London, he was raised in New London County in the city of Norwich. Born at the Yale New Haven Hospital Casey was an artistic being right from the very start. Attending the Massachusetts College of Art Casey set his path to be a creator of art and to express himself in many expressive ways.

After college Casey spent 5 years in Boston and then went with his best friend to the big city of New York to make their way in the art world. There they spent the years 2007 – 2011 making art and growing in the knowledge of how the world of artists work and respond to one another. Casey came to New London in 2011.

The first job that Casey held in this fair city was at a then popular coffee shop called The Bean and Leaf. He became friendly with two of the other people that were working there, Adam Campo and Alan Glidden. It was because of these friendships that Casey found a place where he felt like he was part of the community, and that this city was Home. On his birthday in November, Adam and Allen took Casey out telling him that they had something special planned for him. They went to a local bar, The EL n GEE, that usually had music being performed at it and met up with other people that were friendly with Casey. From there Adam and Allen said that the party had not yet begun and they and several of the other Punk tribe went swimming. It was then that Casey felt like he belonged to this community that he saw everyone he met as a celebrity.

8 SOUND WAVES



Casey's first art showing was at a fun little gallery called the Pigeonhole which was run by his friend Adam Campo. The name of the show was I Give You Trash, and was very well attended by the community including none other than our mayor at that time the Honorable Daryl Finizio. The show was full of Casey's dark humor such as 3-D babies throwing up and other things that were somewhat on what some in society would deem as “trashy”. Casey has a leaning toward babies, sad adolescents, and old people. In much of his art that this author has seen I see real emotions and real people being put forth in the creation of Casey's art. It is heart catching and evokes feelings that we all may of felt at one time or another as we came up through our childhood and as we dealt with the emotions of adolescence. Casey also did a series of Ravens that I had the opportunity to purchase a piece of to give to my dear friend Dr. Michael Wylde. I have also acquired a piece that Casey did in a series of little girls that are represented as ballerinas. His art is inviting to see but not because of the flowers and trees or other pretty things but rather because of the emotions that are so deeply portrayed in his work. It is profoundly thought invoking work that brings the realities of life and living out in the open.

In 2015 I ran into Casey outside of my home and got into a conversation with him about his newest project. He wanted to create a space to make things. Thus came Spark Maker Space. Spark started as a community project, a Maker space for people to share tools, interests, projects, education, skills, and to support and value each other. This is really a true definition of community... Common Unity.

In our conversation I asked Casey what it was that drew him to New London. His answer was so real when it comes to our city and the people that live here. Casey says that when he first got here, he would be walking down the street whether it was Washington St, Union St or going to the Hygienic on Bank St. And be talking to all of the celebrities. He feels as if all of us that live here are celebrities and we all know, love, and support each other and lift each other up; again, a true definition of community.

Casey is now working on a series of very real puppets that look exactly like life has many of us looking at the ages that he is portraying. They have distinct personalities and exhibit in their expressions what it is in their lives that they have been through. You can see these puppets and other examples of Casey's art at www.lifeisgross.com or on Instagram @caseyspec.

When asked what it is that he thinks has shaped who he is today Casey says “I believe that I am from all the people that I have met along the way. The Minsters the Mommas, the Lovers and the Lost loves, the good the bad all formed the outcomes that I create today.” I see so much of Casey's life manifested in the art that he creates I hope that you will take a moment and look at his work, it is Spectacular!

Spark Maker Space is at 7 Union Street New London. It can be found online at www.sparkmakerspace.org on instagram@sparkmakerspace.org. You can also stop by and visit this unique and inviting organization, take a tour, become a member or just encourage that making that is taking place. This is part of what makes New London County a real and inviting Community to be a part of.



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9 Robert J 7-10	10 Nick Bosse 8-11	11 Stone County Band 8-11	12 James Harris 4-7
16 Dee Jayne Duo 7-10	17 20th Century Kids 8-11	18 F & Blues Band 8-11	19 Ken Barbar Duo 4-7
23 TBA Call for info	24 Katie Perkins 8-11	25 Rock N' Soul Review 8-11	26 Ramblin' Dan Stevens 4-7
30 Sub Liminals 7-10	1 I Petty the Fool 8-11	TUESDAYS 7-9pm "Best Trivia Ever"	

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			1 John Sage 1pm	2 Jim TooTell 1pm
5 DJ Caswell Cooke 1pm	6 Nathan Hintz 1pm	7 Justin Pomfret 1pm	8 Lucas Neil 1pm	9 Russell Partridge 1pm 6pm - <i>Midget Wrestling</i>
12 DJ Caswell Cooke 1pm <i>Seaglass Fest 11am-5pm</i>	13 DJ Don Doda 1pm	14 Justin Pomfret 1pm	15 John Sage 1pm	16 Russell Partridge 1pm
19 John Maziarz 1pm	20 Peter Weremay 1pm	21 Justin Pomfret 1pm	22 Mike Wedlowski 1pm	23 Boat Cake 1pm
26 Tongue & Groove 1pm	27 Rum Liners 1pm	28 Justin Pomfret 1pm	29 John Sage 1pm	30 Boat Cake 1pm

Friday 3rd
Nathan Hintz 1pm
Don't Tell Lisa
9pm

Saturday 4th
Brian Cabral 1pm
Granite City 9pm

Friday 10th
Rum Liners 1pm
TBA 9pm
Saturday 11th
Beale St Duo 1pm
HIJACKED 9pm

Friday 17th
SPF4 1pm
New Rising Sun Band 9pm
Saturday 18th
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NEVER ENUFF 9pm

Friday 24th
Phil Adams 1pm
Morgan Skelly 9pm
Saturday 25th
John Maziarz 1pm
DJ Caswell 9pm

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23 - Pizzetta, Mystic, CT 6-9pm

THE CARTELLS

4,19 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 3-6pm
4 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 7-9pm
8 - Knick, Westerly, RI 7:30-10pm
11 - Ender's Island, Mystic, CTY 6:30-10:30pm
16 - Bill's Seafood, Old Saybrook, CT 7-10pm
17 - Washington Park, Waterford, CT 6:30-9pm
25 - Festival, Concord, NH 5:15-6:15pm
26 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 5-6pm

CHRISTOPHER JOHN

2,3 - Rosy Tomorrows, Danbury, CT 6-9
9 - Riverwalk, Derby, CT 6-9
10 - Glendale Grill, Easthampton, MA 6-10
11 - Yarde Tavern, S. Hadley, MA 6-9
12 - Arrigoni Winery, Portland, CT 1:30-5:30
15,27 - Shortstop, Westfield, MA 5-8
16 - Rocks 21, Mystic, CT 5-8
17 - Shea's, Manchester, CT 5-8
18 - Chatham Creamery, E. Hampton, CT 5-8
19 - Kent Pizza, Kent, CT 2-5
23 - Friar Tucks, Mystic, CT 8-11
24 - Village Pizza, Preston, CT 8-11
25 - Chicago Sams, Cromwell, CT 5-8
26 - Craft 32, E. Longmeadow, MA 11-2
30 - Zinas, Marlborough, CT 5-8

DON'T TELL LISA

3 - Windjammer, Misquamicut, RI 8-11pm
4 - Relay for Life, Woodstock, CT 5-6pm
12 - City Docks, New London, CT 5-9pm
18 - Pavilion, Old Lyme, CT 2-6pm

DOS AMIGOS

4,25 - Haversham, Westerly, RI 9-12
10 - Angie's Pizza, Mystic, CT 6pm-9

Dr. G & THE BELIEVERS

3 - Waters Edge, Westbrook, CT
4 - The Barn, Groton, CT
22 - Knick, Westerly, RI
24 - Filomena's, Waterford
26 - Black Eyed Sally's, Hartford, CT 3pm

EIGHT TO THE BAR

5 - Stanley Park, Westfield, MA 6-8pm
7 - Green, N. Haven, CT 7-8:30pm
8 - Saltonstall Park, Watertown, MA 6:30-8pm

12 SOUND WAVES

10 - Stanley Center, N. Branford, CT 5-8pm
17 - Water's Edge, Westbrook, CT 6-10pm
18 - Community Center, Litchfield, CT 7-9pm
23 - Norton Park, Plainville, CT 6:30-8pm
24 - Moseley's, Dedham, MA 8:30-11:30
30 - John Brown House, Providence, RI

F & BLUES BAND

5 - Brown Derby, Montville CT 3-6pm
11 - Elks, Groton, CT
18 - The Barn, Groton, CT 8-11pm
19 - Eastern Pt Beach, Groton, CT 6-8pm
26 - Rathskeller, Charlestown, RI 4-7pm

FRANKLIN BROTHERS

24 - Ocean Beach, New London, CT 8pm

JAMES HARRIS

1,6,8,15,22,25,29 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
2,18,30 - Woodfellas, New London, CT 5pm
3,10 - Rocks 21, Mystic, CT 4pm
11,26 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 3pm
12 - The Barn, Groton, CT 4pm
23 - Village Pizza, Preston, CT 8pm
24 - Grey Sail, Westerly, RI 4pm

LARA HERSCOVITCH

4 - The Burren, Somerville, MA
11 - Localpalooza, Bethany, CT
14 - Festival, New Haven, CT

NICK BOSSE

1 - Indian Ranch, Webster, MA 5:30-8:30pm
3 - The Shamlot, Westerly, RI 6-9pm
4 - River Park, Sprague, CT 6-8:30pm
9 - Filomena's, Waterford, CT 6-8pm
10 - The Barn, Groton, CT 8-11pm
16 - Saltwater Farm, Stonington, CT 5-7pm
17 - Rathskeller, Charlestown, RI 8-11pm
19 - Taylor Brooke, Woodstock, CT 2-5pm
23 - Askew, Providence, RI 9pm
24 - Phoenix, Pawcatuck, RI 7:30-10:30pm
25 - Rose Festival, Norwich, CT 8-9pm
26 - Shunock Brewery, N.Stonington, CT 3-6pm

RAMBLIN' DAN STEVENS

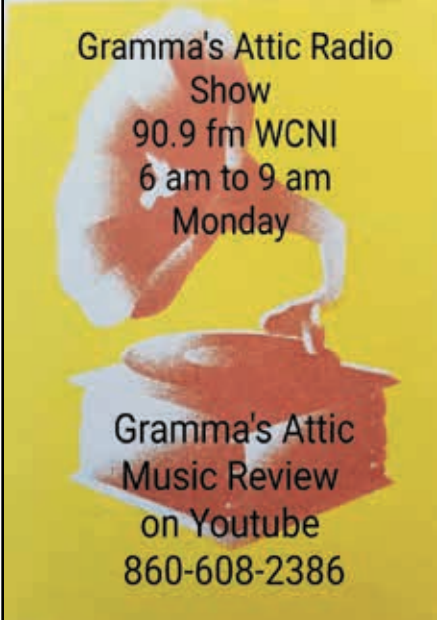
2 - Po's, E. Hampton, CT 5pm
3 - Witchdoctor Brewing, Southington, CT 6pm
4 - Tunnel Bar, Northampton, MA 6pm
5 - Tour d'Lyme, Lyme, CT noon
10 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
12 - Meadows, Essex, CT 4pm
14 - Memorial Library, N. Haven, CT 6:30pm
16 - Museum of American Art, New Britain, CT 5:30pm
17 - Blackledge Country Club, Hebron, CT 6:30pm
18 - Lyman Allyn, New London, CT 11:30am
18 - Gilbert V. Boro, Old Lyme, CT 5pm
19 - Taphouse 150, Cromwell, CT 11:30am
20 - Lyme Street, Old Lyme, CT 5pm
22 - Town Green, Old Saybrook, CT 6:30pm
23 - Woodfellas, New London, CT 6pm
24 - Hog River Brewing, Hartford, CT 6:30pm
25 - Rose Arts Festival, Norwich, CT 7pm
26 - The Barn, Groton, CT 3pm

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ERIC KRASNO

By Joby Rogers

Guitarist, Producer, and Singer, Eric Krasno is an artist of many talents. His production and writing credits include an eclectic group of A-Listers including, 50 Cent, Norah Jones, Justin Timberlake, and Aaron Neville, just to name a few. His latest LP, 'Always', is a collaborated effort with producer and long-time associate, Otis McDonald. 'Always' was inspired by Krasno's new-found security and enjoyment that he's come to realize in fatherhood and family. With the pandemic forcing the world to take a beat, Krasno found inspiration in a new home, wife, and child. Krasno is an artist who is constantly challenging himself with new escapades and experiences that leave you longing for whatever comes next. I talked with Eric about his new LP and his current endeavors.

You've produced diverse artists like 50 Cent, Norah Jones, Justin Timberlake, and Aaron Neville. Do you have to be influenced by these artists to produce them or do you look for challenges outside your comfort zone or genre?

In certain cases, I've been fortunate enough to work with people I am influenced by, like Aaron Neville. It's a new journey every single time I produce a record with someone. It's not just where they've been as an artist but where they want to go. The greatest producers find new pathways for an artist.

Many artists can become fixed in their ways and are creatures of habit.

How do you, as a songwriter and producer, persuade them to leave their comfort zone and try new musical endeavors that they may feel uncomfortable with?

That's a good one. In the case of Aaron Neville. He wasn't that involved in the writing or mixing process. He would come in, sing and leave. He'd been writing poetry and he sent me 50 poems and wanted help in turning them into songs as well as being part of the process. It was a different process for him. We were the youngsters to him and he had fun around that new energy.

Was it difficult to reconstruct poems into songs?

It was not easy. I worked with a great songwriter from Portland, Maine named Dave Gutter. I've worked with him quite a bit. My mom has a home deep in Vermont and we went there, with this book of poems and we sat there with two guitars. We crafted about 17 songs and we made beats and demo-ed them just so he could get the feel for them. The hardest part of producing is finding the right key for every vocalist. The funniest part of that is that he would have me sing the reference parts in his key. I would have to go in front of him and mimic the "Aaron Neville" vocal (laughs). It was all so nerve-racking. He would get to the studio at 7 am and yell, "All right Kras, what are we doing today?"

Most singers you've worked with are solely that, a
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singer. So they would put their trust in your producing and writing expertise to bring the best out in their vocal talent. You've worked with some heavy musical icons like Prince, Lady Gaga, Stevie Wonder, and Madonna to name a few. What, in your opinion, is the most important component to guiding such remarkable talent to yield the results you're after?

For me, it's in creating an environment where the artist is very comfortable. It helps that I was and still am an artist, performer, and musician as well. Critiquing a performance is a tricky thing. There is a certain psychology to it. You don't want to take them out of the zone or away from the vibe. In certain cases, if they're not hitting the right thing you have to take a break and in other instances, you have to push them this or that way. You have to know the person. Sometimes if I have a certain idea for someone I have to disguise it to make it seem like it was their idea. Every time I make a record I learn new things and gain new useful tools to get the desired performance out of each person.

What are the inherent differences when working with a seasoned artist as compared to a new artist?

Oh, yea! Huge differences! In some cases, the older artists are not technically savvy. Then there are the younger artists who have their laptops and they have 'Logic' and other resources and they know how to mix records and they know how to produce records, quote-unquote, and in certain cases they do. In certain cases, having those tools is great and in other cases, it could be a hindrance, because they're playing with them all the time and not necessarily trusting the producer or the process. It's a lot harder to work as a producer now because those tools are so available and people don't think they need the producer for those reasons. I guess the word producer has changed quite a bit, but I do believe in the traditional sense of it. People like Ahmet Ertegun made classic records. Sometimes the differences are subtle but important. I've also recently learned that I might not be the guy to do a certain thing but I can bring in the person who can. Producer Quincy Jones was such an incredible arranger and had such an incredible crew of musicians and he knew what person to bring in for a certain job. That's producing. In the modern era, you have these 'star producers' like Pharrell and Timbaland. I love what they do but there are a lot of guys that people just don't talk about that create a vibe and know the right people. Don Was is another example.

The 'Lost Myself' video brings back the breaking and popping phenomenon of the 80s. Did breaking and popping inspire the song?

I guess you can say it did. I grew up in that era. With movies like 'Breakin' and 'Wild Style'. I grew up listening to 'Soul' music and the Beatles at home.

I know you were a 'Kangol' guy back in the day. Did you partake in Breaking and Popping?

Oh, yea!. When I was 12 or 13, my brother was my break-dance trainer. I won some junior high school competition and all of a sudden, I thought I was the man (laughs). My back hurts just thinking about it. I was into Hip Hop too.

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Run DMC and the Beastie Boys were everything to me. I took notice of how they sampled Led Zeppelin and James Brown and I took a deep dive into that stuff and became focused on what they were sampling.

Over the last two years, you said you, “Finally found your people”, referring to your wife and son. How do you balance everything you do? The writing, producing, music, and Family?

It's a lot. Even this morning, I'm running out here to get on this call. The baby, breakfast, an electrician is here, my wife. When you have a family it changes the game in so many ways. More positive than anything and there's nothing better than being with my son. I'm about to go on tour with this new record. It's the first time in a few years and the pressure is on to a certain degree.

Has becoming a father impacted your work?

Definitely! Half of the new album was written during the pandemic. Songs like 'Hold Tight', 'Always With You' and 'Alone Together' are all about what I was going through during the pandemic. Becoming a Dad while we're in a lockdown and we don't know what's going to happen and I'm bringing a new life into the world during this crazy time.

'Always' appears to be entrenched in the reliability and comfort of having a family. How did this newfound attitude affect the direction of the album?

Lyrical, it was conscious. But I didn't think about the sound until people started calling me and saying, "Dude! I can tell you live in California now." (laughs). The huge thing about this record was linking up with Otis McDonald who co-produced it with me, Whereas we did most of the work virtually. It was unlike any record I ever made. I stayed here in my studio and he stayed in his. Then we did it over 'Zoom' which was new at the time. Eventually, I did go up to his studios for further collaboration.

You stated that the last two years revolving around the pandemic and the racial strife in America have made you approach songwriting differently. In the semblance of artists like Marley, Sam Cooke, Marvin Gaye, Springsteen, and Dylan, who have used their music and platform to speak out against political, racial, and environmental injustices. Do you think it is an artist's duty to reflect on the times? Do you think it's better to use your voice and risk losing fans or not say anything at all? Are there boundaries?

I think it's categorically different for everybody. I currently have been writing more politically influenced music. You have to feel it because you know instantly when it's contrived. To be honest, when I was writing this record, I was scared because if I was going to talk about it I would not have been eloquent. I was shutting down and that's why I was seeking comfort from within my family. I didn't know how to address what was going on at the time. Now that I've processed more, My writing has been more influenced by culture and the world. Some people I want to hear that from, and some people I don't. It's their right to do whatever they want. I will say it's imperative for someone to do it. Like in the '60s and

'70s, that music changed the world, in my opinion. I also think that sometimes music is just something to take you away from your problems and all the things going on. I found myself listening more to instrumental music during the pandemic. I just wanted to vibe out.

The album 'Blood From a Stone' tested you. You were going through a breakup during the recording process and you had to start from scratch, build a band and present them, not only for the studio but for a tour as well. When writing new material do you retain any pressure from your past successes?

That album was such a test, I was out touring with 'Lettuce' and 'Soul Live' and this was the beginning of social media. I'd been producing and writing for years, but you didn't know me, I wasn't the singer or the guy out front, so when I went out on tour, people were expecting to hear a 'Soul Live - Lettuce' infusion. I was not and still am not as confident as a singer. I was originally going to bring in a bunch of singers but people I was working with said. "No! You should sing this". But while I was mixing it, I realized it was going to take a while to get all the singers together because they were all out on tour, so out of convenience, I figured, maybe I should just sing on it. I then realized I didn't write the songs in the right keys for myself (laughs). I was learning what I could sing and what I should work on.

You're involved in many other projects and groups. When you write new material how do you decide if it's for you or one of your other projects?

As a result of the pandemic, I've just been writing for myself, unless otherwise noted. Sometimes I'll write something that just doesn't fit me. This is too pretty or too grimy for me. In those cases, I'll put them aside and wait for someone to come along who's right for it.

Your recording process varies depending on the artist and the musical direction. Are there any parts of your creative process that are set in stone that transpire for all your projects?

Not really, in more recent times I've learned that a song has to be played acoustically to be good. I try to write with a guitar and a vocal in mind and then build around that.

I know that you prefer an environment that sparks your creativity and doesn't overwhelm your senses. When you were in the Northeast, you often headed to upper New England for solitude. Is that still the case or can a frantic setting be influential in any way?

It's funny you say that. When I was in NYC, I was making the beats heavier. Now I'm sitting outside, playing guitar, looking at the sunset (laughs). It's a lot quieter and different energy where I live now and it's taken me a while to just calm down.

When writing a song, how do you know when you're done?"

Lately, I've been working with collaborators who will tell me that. Sometimes I'll keep going way longer than I need to. My process has simplified as I've gotten older. Rather than

using too many ingredients, now, each ingredient has to be good. The reason a Motown record never gets old is because the parts are right and the band is together and they're not throwing a million things at the wall. I had 'Pro-tools' and my MPC and all my keyboards and I would add so much crap, just because I could.

Are there songs in your catalog that weren't singles or hits that you would like to see get their moment in the sun?

I have a whole album that came out right before the pandemic and it was the worst marketing that could ever be done. I changed my name to 'Kraz' for this thing. I thought it was a great idea but I didn't get to follow through. It had animation and the album had a storyline from beginning to end to coincide with it. It was called 'Telescope'. There's one cut on there called 'Carry My Name' that I want to recut. It's a special song to me.

Would you consider that song autobiographical?

Oh, Yea! I wrote that with a friend in mind. It's a song about our dads. We both had a close relationship with our Dads. It was one of those songs that just came out of the air. Those are always the best songs for me.

In terms of the overall composition, what is your favorite song and why?

There's a song off the new record called 'Hold Tight'. I went to Montana during the pandemic, my wife was about seven months pregnant. We spent time with two of my closest friends and their parents. One of my friends Dad was talking to me and dropping all these Dad nuggets of knowledge. That song encapsulates that experience. We'd be fishing or stargazing and he would drop these bits of wisdom about what it means to be a Dad. Sadly he passed away about six months ago. That song reminds me of that experience.

Isn't it strange, Eric, when you become a father for the first time how You instantly experience love at first sight and how differently you reflect upon your parents?

Yeah! It's insane. I think about my Mom so much now. "How did she do this?" (laughs). You absolutely can't explain it.

How much influence did Bob Dylan's 'The Man In Me' affect your musical journey?

That song is how I hooked up with Otis McDonald, the producer. He was putting together a project and that song was always in my head. There are certain songs you hear a million times but they don't resonate with you until a certain moment. I began learning it and playing it for my wife and as I learned it, it hit me.

You and I share a wanderlust. I travel quite a bit as well and I found that travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness. You learn that all people cry, laugh, work, worry and die. Was traveling a similar experience for you?

Absolutely! I was fortunate because my parents were travelers. As a child, I was surrounded by culture. Most of the

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traveling occurred in my 20s and 30s and I didn't have much time to reflect on that until these past few years. How fortunate I was that Music took me to all these places, I never would have even thought of going to. The times I've spent with people all over Europe, Africa, Brazil, and Japan. It has been more impactful than any other experience. You're right. When you travel and have been around the world, how could you ever be prejudiced? Once you've experienced people and their pride in their culture and you see the look in their eyes as they showed me their ways of life.

I've made it a deliberate point to get off the beaten path. To purposefully not go where the tourists go.

I want to continue to do that too and I want to make sure that it's something my child experiences as well.

Ok! Eric. Thank you again for your time. It's been a pleasure speaking with you. Anything you'd like to add before we wrap?

I appreciate your insight. You really asked some great questions. I appreciate you reaching out and letting more people know what I'm up to. It's been a kind of 'every man for himself' atmosphere in the music business. People like you can spread the word about my music or anybody's music. For me, it's all about making people feel better than they did before they pressed play.

Brilliant!

For Eric's upcoming projects and tour dates visit erickrasno.com

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SOUND WAVES 19

Richie Furay Picks Up The Country Pieces

By Mark T. Gould

"There's just a little bit of magic in the country music we're singing, so let's begin" – Richie Furay, 1968.

54 years after he wrote and sang that line, one of the very first by Poco, the band that arguably first merged country music with rock and roll, the pioneer of that new genre, Richie Furay, is finally releasing his first country album.

His first studio project in seven years, "In The Country," recorded more than two years ago, and out on July 8, features Furay's still-gorgeous voice at age 78 covering a wide variety of country classics, such as Garth Brooks' "The River," Alabama's "I'm In a Hurry and I Don't Know Why," and Lee Ann Womack's "I Hope You Dance."

He also delivers stellar versions of John Denver's "Take Me Home, Country Roads," and Marc Cohn's "Walking in Memphis," as well as Ricky Nelson's "Lonesome Town," and Julie Miller's "Chalk."

Plus, there are two exclusive digital bonus tracks: Furay's new rendition of Poco's signature song "Pickin' Up the Pieces" (quoted above) and George Strait's "I Cross My Heart."

To flush out the project, Furay teamed with an old friend, producer Val Garay, and together they recorded at Nashville's legendary Blackbird Studio. There, Garay assembled a group of stellar Nashville session musicians, including drummer Victor Indrizzo, bassist Glenn Worf, keyboardist Steven Jay Nathan, pedal steel player Dan Dugmore, and guitarists Tom Bukovac and Chris Leuzinger.

Special guest appearances include John Berry, who duets with Furay on his hit "Your Love Amazes Me," and country superstar Vince Gill, who joins in on "Lonesome Town."

The album also features former Chicago bassist and vocalist Jason Scheff, as well as Furay's fellow Poco alum and current Eagles bassist/vocalist Timothy B. Schmit.

The genesis for the project actually started over four years ago, after a special concert by Furay in Southern California.

"I was invited to do an autism benefit event in California with the Wild Honey Orchestra," Furay told me in a recent interview. "The event centered around doing Buffalo Springfield's catalog. Val and his partner came to the concert. It was at that time the pitch was made to do the album."

"We talked about the concept, and over the next couple of months sorted out the songs. Until we did that, I wasn't sure doing a recording of 'iconic country hits' was something I wanted to do," he recalled. "But when the first song on Val's list was a song, 'Your Love Amazes Me,' that I had loved since

the first time I heard it, I knew we were a go."

"Country" is Furay's ninth studio album, and, by far, at least to my ears, the best sounding one. Garay, who in addition to working with Furay on two projects, has produced James Taylor, Linda Ronstadt, and Kim Carnes, certainly knows how to use the spotlight on the crucial part of a recording, here, Furay's still-glorious voice, mixed slightly above a tender backing of steel, banjo and other instruments, lending the project an absolute warmth, which, to his fans and friends, not only showcases Furay's voice, but reveals the essence of his personality.

"Once the songs were picked, we just went forward," he remembered. "Val has some wonderful ears; sonically, they are the best. For both records I've made with him I have been able to sing the lead vocals while the band was tracking. Every other recording I've done it's always been an overdub. But, (with this) I sang 80 – 90 percent live while the tracks were going down."

"Val put my lead vocal up front, where it should be, saying this is a Richie Furay record, not a band record," he said.

"Of course, there were tweaks, but the feeling and emotion is there," he continued. "When that happens, there is a certain cohesiveness that makes everything fit like a glove."

That voice. It's beauty, depth and emotion has been the hallmark of Furay's entire career, stretching back to his days with Stephen Stills and Neil Young in the legendary Buffalo Springfield. It has carried him from there to Poco to the Souther Hillman Furay Band, and to a sturdy solo career of both secular and non-secular recordings and concerts.

It is, at least to me, the major reason why he is in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

"I think my voice began to mature into what I think it should sound like about midway through Poco – maybe it was just a growing confidence, it's definitely grown with time," Furay recalled. "I do have some issues with live shows, especially when they are back- to- back, because I don't sing properly, from my diaphragm. I sing from the neck up and it can wear on you."

"I tried taking voice lessons at one time, and it wasn't for me. I will say God has been gracious in getting me through most all the shows I been able to do. At this age, I sure appreciate it, and I do try to take as much care of it as I can; it is my instrument, and when it goes – well"

Furay will be taking his instrument on the road, playing a series of concerts, several at City Winery locations, to promote the new album. Interestingly, a few gigs last year were announced as his "final concerts," but he is keeping an open mind.

"We'll see what happens. I enjoy playing live shows and



meeting the fans who come out to see me," Furay, whose graciousness with people is equally legendary, said.

"Over the last couple of years, because of the economics involved, I've had to scale down the band version on occasion. I like the intimacy of that, but then I also like the energy of the full band, as well," he said. "It's fun though, doing the songs in the raw form as they were written, and then doing them at other times with a band and full arrangements."

"I am not going to be going out as much as I'd like, but will pick and choose certain dates for as long as I can," Furay added. "I have set a certain standard for myself, and when I can't attain that, then I'll make another decision."

Clearly, the highlight of the "Country" tour is an invitation, arguably long overdue after Furay's over half a century in the music business, to play a show at the Grand Ole Opry, the high church of country music in Nashville, on June 17.

"This is something I've waited 50 years to do, it'll be special," he said.

Furay's been a fan of country music since his childhood in Ohio, and he has some definite opinions about the state of that art.

"It was the music that grabbed my attention (then), but it was much different then than it is now," he recalled.

"I do think country music today sounds like it has an automated formula, and 'pop country' is as good a way to describe it as anything," he observed. "I guess it has changed with the times, so to speak."

"I think there is an era that I identify with, the 90s, that the songs, and I'm speaking strictly from a production point of

view, didn't go too far pop, but, after all's said and done and you waded through the pop production – it's the song that matters.

"Honestly, what makes a good country song is the lyrics, with a good melody to support them," Furay added. "As you listen to the songs on 'In The Country,' I think it sums it up. They are all songs with heartfelt lyrics and a melody to support them, and that's why they were hits."

Furay's been approaching songs and music that way for a long time, going back to 1968, when, as Buffalo Springfield was falling apart, he and fellow band member Jimmy Messina had a vision to merge country with rock. They added pedal steel guitar virtuoso Rusty Young, and, with Poco, thereby influenced a plethora of bands and songs that came after them.

"We were just doing what came naturally," he said. "Regardless of the commercial success, we were creating a sound in which we were being true to our heart. There were a lot of people who were beginning to identify with what we were doing. It just so happens we were the ones to step up and meet the challenge."

"I was one of the pioneers with the vision to cross rock and roll with country music," he remembered. "It was something being introduced from the rock and roll side of music, and people looked at it as visionary."

"Was I successful? I guess that depends on what you mean by successful. Did I make a lot of money? No. Did what I envisioned and helped to pioneer become some of the most popular American music? Yes."

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CULTURAL CENTER**

Sat, June 11, 8 pm

STORRS, CT – Prepare to dance the night away celebrating UConn's Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center 50th anniversary with Orlando Ortiz & Karibe Mambo Orchestra on Saturday, June 11. As part of the long-awaited return of Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts' cabarets, Latin food, desserts and drinks will be available when doors open at 7:00 pm. DJ Nervioso will be mixing live from the moment the doors open until Orlando Ortiz & Karibe Mambo Orchestra takes the stage at 8 pm.

Orlando Ortiz & Karibe Mambo Orchestra are a ten-piece Latin band that has been setting the tri-state area (NY, CT, NJ) on fire with their unique sound for almost 20 years. The band is an ensemble of seasoned musicians who have played in some of the best musical groups throughout the U.S. and abroad. First and foremost a dance band, they project a powerful and energetic sound, specializing in Caribbean music - Salsa, Cha-Cha-Cha and Son Montuno.

Rodney Rock, Jorgensen's Director, said he is looking forward to collaborating with UConn's Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center (PRLACC) for this special event.

"We have collaborated with our colleagues from PRLACC for many years to bring numerous Latin themed events to both the UConn and greater Storrs community," Rock said. "I am thrilled we are able to come together again to celebrate this wonderful moment for PRLACC, as well as the triumphant return of Jorgensen's cabarets."

Fany D. Hannon, director of PRLACC, is excited for this Latin cabaret.

"I love all of the special events we have collaborated on with Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts in the past, but I am particularly thrilled for this one. We will be reconnecting with the alumni from the 1970s as we celebrate PRLACC's 50th anniversary. We are also grateful to Rod and everyone at Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts for their continued support and collaboration."

Doors open at 7 pm with DJ Nervioso. Event starts at 8 pm. Latin Food/Dessert (Cash Only) & Bar

Orlando Ortiz & Karibe Mambo Orchestra is co-presented by Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts and UConn's Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center (PRLACC).

Tickets for ORLANDO ORTIZ & KARIBE MAMBO ORCHESTRA are now available online: General public: \$20-25, Students/Youth: \$15. For tickets and information, go to jorgensen.uconn.edu, or call the Box Office at 860-486-4226, Monday - Friday, 10 am - 5 pm. The Box Office opens 90 minutes prior to events.



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Opening Act: Sondra Levine

July 18 - Otis and the Hurricanes

Intermission: Alex Hatch (SHS Student Act)

July 25 - Sugar Ray and The Bluetones

Intermission: Maggie Welch (SHS Student Act)

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Blue Monday Concerts are free, family friendly events held outdoors at the Mystic River Park. Concerts have the generous support of sponsors (individuals, businesses and foundations) which allows

Blue Monday to fund music education in our local schools, and provide food assistance to the neediest in our community. Blue Monday is part of the Stonington Education Fund, a 501(c)3 non-profit that seeks to promote excellence in Stonington's Public Schools through effective use of private donations and grants. All concert attendees are also welcome to bring a jar of peanut butter or any other non-perishable canned good to the show for donation to the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center food pantry.

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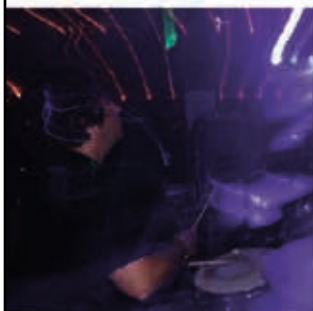
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HEARING AID



Lush Honey "Shape or Form"

Boss Tweed

Summer is finally here and a lot of us are ready to get into party mode again. Lush Honey has the same thing in mind with their recent release "Shape or Form". It's full of high-energy jams guaranteed to fuel your road trip with the kind of drive that gets you primed for good times.

Their brand of music is a fusion between soul, progressive rock, funk and blues. Guitarist and producer Daniel Girouard does a lot of heavy lifting in the band with a flair that shows off his background in jazz as well as a kind of grit that reminds me of Band of Gypsies-era Hendrix at times.

Balancing out the high energy guitar is the silky-smooth vocals of frontwoman Jennifer Myers who brings a bluesy touch to the melodies. She excels at expressing herself tastefully, tying the tunes together with her sultry voice while also leaving enough space for the boys to really jam out and let loose.

Lush Honey knows how to rock out hard. While "Shape or Form" is only a six-song album, don't be fooled; most of the songs clock in at close to seven minutes or more. The rhythm section is super tight with the funky bass grooves coming from Zach Gregory and with the stylings of Ian Haas who is an exceptional jazz drummer, constantly adding contrast with great stick-work.

I love the second track "Uppercut". It features some pretty nasty wah-wah guitar riffs in the main section before the song goes off into jam-space half-way through. Myers wails out the vocals complimenting the energy of the track, "Cause we are never running out of energy / We'll keep coming

back to you / And it comes naturally / Don't you make this harder than it has to be / I'll be down for you as long as you are down for me".

Another great tune on here is the last one, "Convert". It starts with a jazzy 5/4 rhythm and some interesting chord changes before the energy ramps up and then the song just starts spinning off into other directions, with a dreamy jam section that goes a little bit freeform before returning to the main progression to land the album back on earth.

I'm kind of biased towards Lush Honey already as I've seen them perform a bunch and I know how hard they can bring the funk. I feel like they've done a really great job capturing the essence of their live shows with "Shape or Form". Put this one in your car next time you need some pre-game party vibes and liven up your summer!

- Tom Matthew
Two Ton Music



Markey Blue Ric Latina Project

"Jumpin' the Broom"

Soul Sound Records

Jumpin' the Broom is on one level a wedding celebration in the blues genre, a passion play of guitar and smoky vocals which are balanced and intertwined, in which the duo's ten year project has followed a separate lead into the marriage of Markey Blue and Ric Latina. This not to suggest that Jumpin' The Broom is a soft, romantic sort of record: the opening track starts the album off with a clear toned, soaring blues guitar riff, countered by Markey Blue's slightly raspy-voiced take on a man's angst driven quest for love, telling him to "roll

that dice, spin that wheel, you got it Bad For Real."

Ric Latina's guitar is a driving force behind this collection of blues inspired rock music. The clarity of his playing is at once striking, followed by the recognition of a musicality and, equally enjoyable, sheer variety in his playing. While the genre carries throughout this album, there is a definite change of style from song to song. This is a quality often missing from bands which feature the musicianship of single band members.

Markey Blue (who shares writing credits with Ric Latina under her offstage name of Jeanette Markey) maintains a sense of hard living and costly lessons, strong boundaries of learned caution expressed as "it's gonna take a whole lot of loving to Be With Me." Yet she has the gift of inflection which allows that the possibility for intimacy and even marriage, can still exist. This conflict between cautious wisdom and desire is expressed nicely with "I'm The Right Kind Of Woman, you're just the wrong kind of man."

The ten year project by Markey Blue and Ric Latina has built a musical foundation which sounds natural and easy, enhanced by the backing of musicians who contribute with the same sense of practiced ease. It is a quality only available through time spent playing, performing, and recording. The group has found success in having their music featured on television shows and movies, including Amazon Prime Videos. This is a fine collection of songs, and of music, by the newlyweds who present a view of relationships in the real world. More info may be found at www.MarkeyBlueRicLatina.com, and on the various social media platforms.

- Jon Persson



Merle Jagger

"Trash Talking Guitars"

This Los Angeles, California Honky Tonk trio that's been around for over a decade definitely, know how to put the rock in www.swaves.com

Rocka Billy. But one thing they never seem to forget is that no matter what color their country twang may be; the shadows their down home, foot moving music creates is always blue. With a name that combines the first name of one of the toughest artist in country music history with the last name of the Monkey Man leader of one of the most prolific rock bands that has ever been; you better be able to deliver.

'Reckless', the first track, with its slide guitar and jamming beat, is a two step that gives the listener a tear filled mug of beer at a road house bar somewhere on Rte 66.

The next song 'Hurt By Love' tells a story that's been told and re-told so many times you'd think it's worn itself out. Yet, Guitarist and lead vocalist Mark Christian with his unstoppable rhythm section that's made up of drummer Johnny Ray and bassist Gabe Davis give this jamming number a new set of rules.

'Broken Home Yard Sale' keeps this boot stomping dance party going throughout this testimonial about the dregs left over from a serious relationship.

'Working For The Blues' is a funky groove that's an honest trip through a blues musician's career that proves it's not about the money.

'Another Bar To Cry In' has got the Texas strut going on, but amazingly Christian's slick guitar coupled with the driving rhythm section once again give new life to an age old theme.

"TRY" keeps the s#%t kicking going that these guys make refreshing with derelict vocals and an interesting bridge in the song.

'Pour Me A Drink' has a great bass line and steel guitar riffs that put the tree in country.

'Run Johnny Run' is RockaBilly with a double tap groove and unforgettable guitar that pops and slides.

'Blue Moon of Kentucky' Is a two stepper that makes you dance. With some Toy Caldwell style jr. guitar work.

'Ranch Rock Revival' Once again it's a two steppin' thing. But the song's intro was misleading. At first the thought was that perhaps Merle Jagger had broken its Honky Tonk mold. As the song progresses it comes back to the intro's theme that is quite tasteful. It leaves the album with a good feeling that there'll be some pioneering before the band's next release

Merle Jagger are exceptionally good at what they do. They have a great sound that at first seemed fenced in but breakthroughs are still being made. Their music is quite danceable and sure to make you feel good. The official release date of this album: 07/15/2022

- Steven Birt



Anna May

"Flimsy Diatribe"

Looking for some chill background music to lounge to with your significant other? Look no further than Anna May's slow acoustic guitar strumming on her album *Flimsy Diatribe*. Anna May's sincere sounding lyrics, when they are audible, are what really carry this album – with the chill acoustic background setting her tone.

However repetitive sounding, the album coasts along nicely beginning with the opener "Poet Masquerade" which is about the ins and outs of relationships: "You don't like sadness . . . my honest interpretation of the truth isn't real to you." Isn't this like lots of relationships where "everybody's listening and nobody hears?" Anna sings of angels and chorus girls and how "he's fared better than she (even if he's damaged too)."

The song "Chameleons" sounds like the 1st song with thin and scarcely audible lyrics but sensitive and relaxing sounds. The title track breaks up the repetition a bit with a slower 2-chord acoustic strum about mountains and wind. Her chords speed up a bit at the end with "ooohs" and "aaahhs" and the vocal "take me down to the rivers and mountains on a sunny day."

There is a shift towards clearer singing of themes of heartache and shantytown allusions everyone wants to shut down in song "Acadia" but with the same slow, meandering 3-chord acoustic singer-songwriter sound. She sings of wearing your cloak of innocence.

On "September Encore" she has "many costumes to wear" as she sings of rosewater and reflections contrasting with darker lyrical themes and a tension-building chord against an "I love You" refrain every time she talks to you.

Those couples who like chill acoustic singer-songwriter music with a hippie vibe should enjoy this album. Dim the lamps, light a couple candles and enjoy a steamy date to this soft gem! Buy at your local music store.

- Andrew Kerbs



Levee Town

"Trying To Keep My Head Above Water"

One of history's most poignant markers is the songs written in times of epoch crises. From the recent years of pandemic disruption has risen the creative, interpretive, descriptive work of many songwriters, to which is added this collection by Brandon Hudspeth. Written during the lockdown, the aim was to bring voice to stories seen through other's eyes, thereby evoking the moods born of a reality we all know far too well. The album follows a path which reflects the changing moods felt throughout Covid time, from the hopeful start to its grim moments.

That said, *Levee Town* is at its heart a rocking, hard driving, blues roots band. The opening track brings energy and pace above all else, the album's title a line in the song *Music Martyr*. The song relates pre-pandemic days of touring coast to coast, trying to survive, keep the bills paid, living life as it used to be. *Quarantine Queen*, sung in melodies shadowed by the band, brings the listener back to the early lockdown days, when "I wash my hands, haven't touched my face, I know we haven't been getting along." We are reminded of the stress of confinement with no clear end in sight, in a time of a lingering, unknown future.

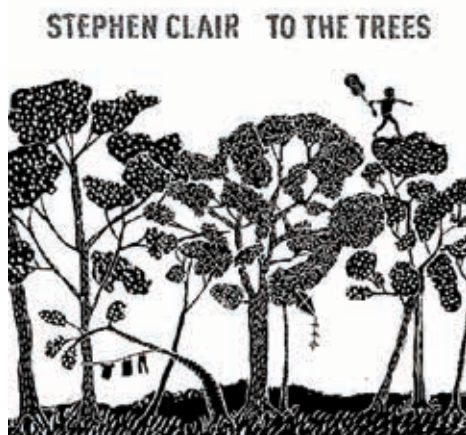
Gala is, as the title suggests, a fun party time, with danceable bass, guitar riffs, all that one needs for a gala in one's home, but with the question of who can be there during a lockdown. *Tarantino* allows the musicians to soar with an instrumental number showcasing the band's gathered chops, providing a nice interlude; the band is, to say the least, talented, versatile, and having fun. A kidding - not kidding-warning to a friend about a woman follows: "She Might Kill You, there's nothing in this world she wouldn't do." The pace slows down for *Weight Of The World*: "we are all different than we recall, here's to our friends who

SOUND WAVES 27

have gone," a sad, necessary tribute to our times.

Levee Town has produced an entertaining yet serious album of pertinent songs, delivered with a steady stream of intricate music interspersed with brilliant flashes of the blues. More info may be found at www.leveetown.com, or on Facebook at leveetownband.

- Jon Persson



Stephen Clair

"To The Trees"

Stephen Clair has lived the life of a troubadour, a guitar playing singer songwriter who in past years travelled the nation and beyond, performing and accruing experience for his songs to relay. In recent years, though, he has engaged in a more rooted life, with home and children in the town where Pete Seeger also settled. From this steady vantage, surrounded by the essence of family and the expansiveness of Hudson Valley splendor, Clair has wrought a new and full album of songs in the troubadour's language of human connection.

On the album's first track Clair makes the poignant observation that "if you hide your heart, your beautiful heart," it's "Worthless Treasure." This is followed by a melancholy, stuck-indoors reflection on chaos theory, thinking how a "Lousy Butterfly" flapped its wings and changed everything about life on this day. Musically, this album has layers beyond the simple guitar playing troubadour's fare, with keyboards, drums, bass, bari sax, trombone: this adds flavor, perhaps a bit of general radio play potential, yet the songs remain true to the spirit and tradition of a folk singer's music.

The title track, To The Trees, follows this theme, and a story from the past wrought new: the singer's sister gets "up from the table, walks out to the yard To The Trees;" she knew what she wanted to be "and that's saying something." It's a clever commentary on the elusive gift of finding one's calling in life. A reminiscence of soft regret is

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on "who knew A Vacation Back Home for me would be a revelation, just the thing I need;" The World Turns has a father's view of "your world turns, I stand by."

Stephen Clair has produced an album of thoughtful songs which bear a careful listening, and more listenings, to catch the subtle, insightful, often heart-tugging observations on life and the people who fill up a life. More info may be found at www.stephenclair.com.

- Jon Persson



Andrew Leahey & the Homestead

"American Static Vol. 2"

Andrew and his band have got a refreshing new sound with aspects of folk, rock n roll and country frosted with the stadium filling qualities of veteran rockers like Styx and Kansas. One thing is for sure is that their sculptured songs will take you to places you never saw coming. The musicianship is outstanding.

'Caught Like a Fire' The album's first track, should prepare the listener for an exciting trip, that is danceable with an arm waving glee.

'Hot House' Has gotta a groovy prelude that flows into sincere verses that are blanketed by an awakening chorus. The guitar work radiates, but gets dirty when it needs

to be.

'Sign of the Times' has a Supertramp feel that accentuates the song's many changes. This song's majestic body tends to rock out.

'Dial Tone' is a bummer song but Leahey and his band know how to create a piece that neglects to leave you unimpressed. This song's a moody ballad that will leave you fulfilled.

'Until There's Nothing But Air' goes country with a bass line that resembles something Crazy Horse's Billy Talbot would have done. Clean meaningful guitar with slide transports the listener. This song has an airy wide open feel to it but still makes you move.

'Mercury' is a slow rocker that delivers. The guitar and keyboards create a sensation that exudes an awareness. This number may ground the listener but it can't stop the pilgrimage its going to take you on.

'Hanging Heavy' takes a different route that brings you a comfortable swing as it explains how we all got to deal with the deep stuff. The guitar comes through so cleanly with such conviction it'll demand every last microbe of your attention.

'Stay Awake' shows you who's in control. It has a Texas feel that is dance-able. The lead guitar cuts a nasty hole through the song's serenity as it compliments this tune's message.

'Carry A Weight' is a slower song about something that just don't seem to work. It has commendable changes with melodic piano and eerie slide guitar. Leahey's vocals deliver.

Andrew Leahey plays guitar, and keyboards. Dan Holmes: Drums and percussion. Jay

Dmuchowski: guitar. Jon Estes: Bass guitar, guitar, slide guitar and keyboards.

This album was released in 2021. It's got some really good stuff going on. Every track creates its own presence that may seem complicated before it graciously blends with the song's message.

- Steven Birt

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8 pm ELVIN BISHOP
And the Big Fun Band

BEER AND WINE TENT BY WILLI-BREW
A variety of food trucks

Tickets on sale at: **EVENTBRITE.COM**

Or at Willimantic Food COOP 91 Valley St.

General admission \$30 \$40 at the gate

VIP Tickets \$200 includes VIP parking, a seat and a table under the tent, deluxe private bathroom and re-admittance privileges, Catered Food all day and 4 Complimentary adult beverages

Platinum Sponsors:

Lester E. and Phyllis
M. Foster Foundation
Shaboo Productions

Gold Sponsors:

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- Capitol Garage
- Wile Hyundai
- Gates GMC Buick-Nissan
- Columbia Ford-KIA

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No outside food or beverages-no re-admittance.